

# Archives and Special Collections

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### **William Conner Farm Architectural Drawings ca.1934 DADA 014**

Title: William Conner Farm Architectural Drawings

Creator: Robert Frost Daggett

Inclusive Dates: ca. 1934

Extent: 4 cu. ft.

Containers: 1 flat file drawer

Language of Materials: Materials entirely in English.

#### Preferred Citation:

William Conner Farm Architectural Drawings, Drawings and Documents Archive, Archives and Special Collections, Ball State University Libraries

#### Historical Note:

William Conner (1777-1855) was a fur-trader, farmer, and businessman who came to Indiana with his brother, John, in the winter of 1801-1802 and settled along the White River in the area north of Indianapolis and south of Muncie, what would later be known as Hamilton County. William lived and traded with members of the Delaware tribe, and eventually married Mekinges, a Delaware woman, with whom he would have six children.

Despite this relationship, Conner began to work in governmental affairs which would lead to the removal of the Delaware out of Indiana. His wife and children left their log cabin home in 1820 and Conner married Elizabeth Chapman, a white woman, later that same year. They would have ten children together.

Conner began construction on their Federal-style brick home in 1823, locating it on a terrace edge overlooking the White River less than half a mile south of his log cabin. By this time Conner's large farm was well established and he was reaping crops of corn, rye and oats. In his later years, Conner moved his large family in 1837 into Noblesville, the town he co-founded, and it is unclear who lived in the home at that time. It is presumed that Conner's children lived there, or possibly tenant farmers. Conner's Delaware children tried unsuccessfully to claim title to the

land and house in the 1860s.

In 1915, the house was purchased by Indianapolis businessman Eugene Darrach, who added the kitchen onto the house. Despite efforts of maintaining the home, it began to fall into disrepair until pharmaceutical executive and philanthropist Eli Lilly (1885-1977) purchased the home in 1934. Combining his interests in farming and history, Lilly immediately sought to restore the existing structures and preserve the estate as a working farm, where he grew crops and raised livestock.

Now known as Conner Prairie, the site is a living history museum where visitors can tour the Conner house as well as other structures on the property.

**Scope and Contents:**

The collection contains site and topographical maps of the William Conner farm, which are not dated but likely date from 1934, when Eli Lilly purchased the farm and began extensive restoration work. The majority of the collection contains elevation and floor plans for buildings that Lilly had constructed for the site. All were drawn by the firm of Robert Frost Daggett, Architect, in 1934. These drawings are pencil on tracing paper. Buildings represented in the collection are: cottage; changes in porch; cistern, garage, heating plant, and well house. Also in the collection are elevation drawings and floor plans of the William Conner house dating from 1934, the time of the building's restoration.

**Conditions Governing Access:**

This collection is open for research.

**Copyright Notice:** Legal title, copyright, and literary rights reside with Drawings and Documents Archive, Archives and Special Collections, Ball State University Libraries, Muncie, IN. All requests to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted to Drawings and Documents Archive.

**Custodial History:**

The William Conner Farm Architectural Drawings were received by Drawings and Documents Archive as a donation from Eli Lilly & Company on 1981/2/27.

**Accruals:** No additions are expected.

**Processing Information:**

Collection processing completed 1987/8/11 by Andrew R. Seager.

Finding aid created 2009/6/3 by Carol A. Street.

**Arrangement:**

The William Conner Farm Architectural Drawings are arranged by subject.

**Collection Inventory:**

<i>Catalog no.</i>	14- 1	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	d
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<i>Project title</i>	Conner, William, Farm: site maps
<i>Location</i>	Hamilton Co., IN
<i>Authorship, year</i>	ca. 1934
<i>Records</i>	A. Site map / Robert Frost Daggett. -- 1 sheet: pencil; 42 x 35 in. B. Topo. map, portion of Wm. Conner Farm / P.E. Middleton Co. -- 1 sheet: blueprint; 33 x 29 in.
<i>Catalog no.</i>	14- 2
<i>Project title</i>	Conner, William, Farm: brick cottage for Mr. Eli Lilly and related outbuildings
<i>Location</i>	Hamilton Co., IN
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Robert Frost Daggett, comm. 3404; 1934
<i>Records</i>	A. Prelim. dwgs.; 8/29/34. -- 2 sheets: pencil; 14 x 15 in., 12 x 12 in. B. Working dwgs.; Sept.-Dec. 1934. -- 19 sheets: pencil; 21 x 39 in. and smaller
<i>Notes</i>	Contents: cottage, cistern, garage, heating plant, and well house. Cottage was built for Tillman Bubenzer, Lilly's foreman, and is known as the Bubenzer House or Foreman's Home.
<i>Catalog no.</i>	14- 3
<i>Project title</i>	Conner, William, Farm: William Conner House
<i>Location</i>	Hamilton Co., IN
<i>Authorship, year</i>	
<i>Records</i>	>> Measured dwgs. / Robert Frost Daggett; 1930s. -- 5 sheets: pencil; 21 x 31 in.
<i>Catalog no.</i>	14- 4
<i>Project title</i>	Conner, William, Farm: William Conner House: restoration
<i>Location</i>	Hamilton Co., IN
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Robert Frost Daggett, comm. 3404; ca. 1934
<i>Records</i>	>> Working dwgs. -- 8 sheets: pencil; 22 x 41 in. and smaller

## Controlled Access Headings:

Documents  
 Houses--Indiana—1820s  
 Architecture, American  
 Architecture--Indiana  
 Drawings, architectural (visual works)  
 Elevation drawings  
 Lilly, Eli, 1885-1977  
 Conner Prairie (Museum)  
 Daggett, Robert Frost, 1875-1955  
 Agriculture--Indiana—History  
 Blueprint (reprographic copy)